

REMARKS

Claims 59-70 are currently pending in this application. Claims 1-58 have been cancelled and new claims 59-70 have been added. No new matter is introduced.

EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

Example embodiments of the present invention are illustrated in Figures 1-5. As illustrated in Figure 1, a polishing table may include a platen 1 and a polishing pad 3. The polishing pad 3 may include an *in situ* window area 3a which has a thickness generally less than a thickness of the remainder of the polishing pad 3. The platen 1 may include a hole and a platen window 1a. As illustrated in Figure 1, the upper surface of the platen window 1a may be flush with an upper surface of the platen 1, thereby forming a void V with polishing pad 3.

In the example embodiments illustrated in Figure 2, an upper surface of the platen window 51a need not be flush with an upper surface of the platen 51, and in essence, may protrude into the void V to create a smaller void V'. In a more extreme embodiment of Figure 2, the platen window 51a may protrude sufficiently into the void, such that there is no void at all, and upper surface of platen window 51a contacts a lower surface of the *in situ* window area 53a.

The example embodiments of Figure 3-5 may further include a transparent supporting layer 63b, 64a, 64b, respectively. As shown in Figure 3, an upper surface of the platen window 61a may be flush with an upper surface of the platen 61. Alternatively, as illustrated in Figure 4, an upper surface of the platen window 62a may be above an upper surface of the platen 61. As illustrated in Figure 5, an upper surface of the platen window 62b may be below an upper surface of the platen 61. In each of the three example embodiments, the height of the transparent support

layer 63b, 64a and 64b may be adjusted such that there is no void between the platen window and the transparent supporting layer.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully submit that the cancellation of claims 1-17 renders this rejection moot.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 7-9 and 11-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,045,439 to Birang et al. Applicants respectfully submit that the cancellation of claims 1-17 renders this rejection moot.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 59 recites a polishing pad including an in-situ window area that is thinner than the polishing pad adjacent to the in-situ window area.

The polishing pad 22 of Birang does not have a varying thickness. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 59 and associated dependent claims 60-70 are allowable for at least this reason.

Applicants further respectfully submit that dependent claims 62-70 recite a platen with a void, which Birang also fails to teach or suggest. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 62-70 are allowable for at least this additional reason.

Claims 1-2, 4-8 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,855,034 to Hasegawa. Applicants respectfully submit that the cancellation of claims 1-17 renders this rejection moot.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 59 recites a polishing pad including in-situ window area that is thinner than polishing pad adjacent to the in-situ window area.

The polishing pad 22 of Birang does not have a varying thickness. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 59 and associated dependent claims 60-70 are allowable for at least this reason.

Applicants further respectfully submit that dependent claims 62-70 recite a platen with a void, which Hasegawa also fails to teach or suggest. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 62-70 are allowable for at least this additional reason.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Birang. Applicants respectfully submit that the cancellation of claims 1-17 renders this rejection moot.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and allowance of each of claims 59-70 in connection with the present application is earnestly solicited.

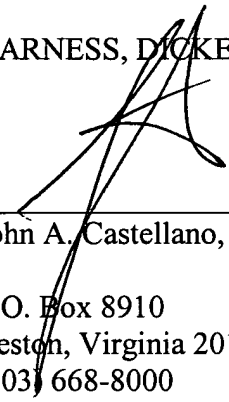
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John A. Castellano at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By



John A. Castellano, Reg. No. 35,094

P.O. Box 8910
Reston, Virginia 20195
(703) 668-8000

JAC/pw